

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02  
SS-15 ICA-20 /094 W  
-----095716 080523Z /12

R 071010Z JUNE 78  
FM AMCONSUL DURBAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2944  
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY MASERU

UNCLAS DURBAN 0343

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, SGEN, SF (TRANSKEI)  
SUBJECT: MANTANZIMA DETAINS METHODIST CLERICS; MOVES TO LEGALIZE  
POLYGAMY

REF: DURBAN 317

1. TRANSKEI PRIME MINISTER KAISER MATANZIMA HAS BEGUN  
IMPLEMENTATION OF HIS BAN ON THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH  
AFRICA IN TRANSKEI BY DETAINING AT LEAST ONE METHODIST CLERIC,  
REV. OSBORNE NGCATHSHE, FOR REFUSING TO JOIN THE NEW METHODIST  
CHURCH OF TRANSKEI. TWO OTHER MINISTERS, REV. SILWANYANE  
OF MARUBENI MISSION IN LIBODE AND REV. MPOSELWA, ARE MISSING AND  
SUSPECTED TO BE IN DETENTION. REV. FADANA, OF RODE MISSION  
IN MOUNT AYLIFL HAS REPORTEDLY FLED TO NATAL TO AVOID DETENTION.

2. THE LAW GIVING EFFECT TO THE NEW CHURCH BECAME EFFECTIVE  
MAY 26 AND APPARENTLY MOST MINISTERS IN TRANSKEI HAVE RELUCTANTLY  
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AGREED TO JOIN IT. HOWEVER THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH IN S.A., REV.  
ABEL HENDRICKS CONDEMNED THE MOVE AND SAID THE NEW CHURCH  
WOULD NOT BE RECOGNIZED BY THE WORLD. HE ALSO WARNED ANY  
MINISTERS JOINING THE NEW CHURCH THEY WILL BE TREATED AS IF  
THEY HAVE RESIGNED FROM THE METHODIST CHURCH.

3. THE PRACTICAL EFFECT OF THE ACTION DECLARING THE METHODIST CHURCH OF S.A. AN "UNDESIRABLE" ORGANIZATION, UNDER A LAW PASSED ONLY THE DAY BEFORE THE PROCLAMATION, WAS TO EMPOWER THE GOT TO SEIZE ALL THE ASSETS (PROPERTY AND MONEY) OF THE CHURCH IN TRANSKEI AND TO PROHIBIT CHURCH MEMBERS FROM ASSOCIATING TO THEMSELVES WITH THE CHURCH IN S.A. MATANZIMA IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THE CHURCH IN S.A. HAS ENRICHED ITSELF THROUGH DRAINING MONEY FROM THE CHURCH IN TRANSKEI AND THE LOCAL CHURCH WOULD THEREFORE BE FINANCIALLY STRONGER AFTER THE MOVE. THIS WAS DISPUTED BY CHURCHMEN IN S.A. WHO CONTEND THE CHURCH IN TRANSKEI HAD LONG BEEN SUPPORTED BY THE S.A. CHURCH AS A WHOLE AND THE MEMBERS IN TRANSKEI WOULD HAVE TO PAY MORE TO THE CHURCH AFTER THE BREAK.

4. ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION FOR MATANZIMA'S ACTION IN BANNING THE CHURCH CAME TO LIGHT MAY 30 WHEN A BILL LEGALIZING POLYGAMY WAS INTRODUCED IN THE ASSEMBLY. THE BILL, WHICH MATANZIMA CALLED ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PASSED SINCE TRANSKEI OBTAINED SELF-GOVERNMENT IN 1963, WAS WARMLY ENDORSED BY THE MALE MEMBERS. MATANZIMA, A LAY METHODIST PREACHER, DENIED AN OPPOSITION CONTENTION HE INTENDED TO TAKE OTHER WIVES BUT SAID, UNDER THE NEW LAW, HE WOULD TAKE BACK INTO HIS HOUSE TWO WIVES HE HAD DIVORCED EARLIER, PAY LOBOLA (BRIDE-PRICE) FOR THEM AND ALLOW THEM TO LOOK AFTER THE CHILDREN THEY HAD BY HIM. HE ADDED, IN DEFENSE OF HIS APPARENT CONTRADICTION, THAT "I AM AN OLD MAN. I WILL JUST LOOK AT THEM." OPPOSITION LEADERS CHARGED THAT SINCE SUCH AN ACTION WAS SURE TO BE CONDEMNED  
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BY THE METHODIST CHURCH, MATANZIMA HAD FOUND A CONVENIENT EXCUSE TO OUTLAW THE CHURCH BEFORE INTRODUCING THE POLYGAMY LEGISLATION.  
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NNN

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* UNCLASSIFIED

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION, RELIGIOUS GROUPS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 07 jun 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978DURBAN00343  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** n/a  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Expiration:**  
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**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 78 DURBAN 317  
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**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** N/A  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2175025  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** <DBA CORRECTED> srp 970822  
**Subject:** MANTANZIMA DETAINS METHODIST CLERICS; MOVES TO LEGALIZE POLYGAMY  
**TAGS:** PINT, SGEN, SHUM, SF, (MATANZIMA, KAISER)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/9b264f7e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014